Afro-Asian Satellite Company Project

513. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Afro-Asian Satellite Company Project which plans to provide uninterrupted Communication facilities through the satellite across 54 countries has since been approved; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) and (b) M/s. ASC Enterprises Limited (Afro-Asian Satellite Company) plan to provide Global Mobile personal Communication Service (GMPCS) using a geo-stationary satellite system with business focus in India, according to information furnished by the company. However, their Satellite coverage area includes India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan & UAE. The company, at present, does not have firm plans to provide services in other countries except India and UAE. The company is yet to apply for a licence in India in the prescribed application form. The form and other details have been sent to the company for doing the needful.

Telephone Facilities in Villages

514. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in each State which are without telephone facilities within their reach, indicating the percentage of the States' population so deprived;

(b) whether any action plan under the ninth plan is contemplated to provide at least one telephone connection per hundred population in each village, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of percentage of Village Panchayats still deprived of telephone connections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) There are 607,491 villages in the country, out which 310,019 have been provided with telecom facilities upto 31.10.98.

297,472 villages i.e. 49% villages and population therein do not have access to the telecom facility yet. State-wise data is provided in the enclosed statement (See below).

(b) The objectives of 9th five year plan are:—

* To provide one public telephone in each of the village not having telephone facility;
* To provide telephone on demand in all the villages.

The number of telephones per 100 population in any village will depend on the actual demand concentration with respect to population.

(c) In the whole of country 45,612 Panchayat villages do not have telecom facility yet. There are 238,977 Panchayats villages and 193,365 have already been provided with telecom facility.

Statement

State-wise Data for Telecom Facilities in Villages as on 31-10-1998

Sl. No.	States	No. of villages in the state	Villages provided with telecom facilities	Villages not having telecom facility	Percentage of Villages not having telecom facility
1.	A & N	282	178	104	37
2.	AP	29460	22933	6527	22
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	3599	557	3042	85